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THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

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Testimony of Senator Chip Curry introducing
LD 2224, "An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential Construction"

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development
March 5, 2026

Representative Gere and distinguished colleagues of the Joint Standing Committee on Housing and Economic Development, my name is Chip Curry. I represent Senate District 11, which includes all 26 rural, coastal, and island communities of Waldo County. Thank you for the opportunity to introduce LD 2224, "An Act to Reduce Certain Costs Associated with Residential Construction."

This bill comes before the committee pursuant to Resolve 2025, chapter 64, which we are more familiar with as LD 1375 from the first session of the 132nd Legislature, legislation that I sponsored last year titled "Resolve, to Establish a Working Group to Address Regulatory Barriers to Housing Construction." That resolution directed the Office of Policy, Innovation and the Future to convene a working group to examine regulatory barriers to housing construction in Maine and develop recommendations for addressing them.

As required by that resolution, the working group submitted its report and recommendations to this committee in December of last year. Among other things, the report recommended several updates to Maine's building code and enforcement framework aimed at reducing unnecessary regulatory barriers to housing construction. These recommendations included removing certain requirements from the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code, such as smoke curtain provisions and text-based elevator communication requirements, examining and potentially prohibiting newly proposed elevator camera requirements, updating fire alarm standards, and directing further study of residential sprinkler requirements and their cost impacts.

LD 2224 was reported out by the committee in order to place these recommendations into bill form so that the Legislature may hold a public hearing and consider them through the normal legislative process.

I'm supportive of moving this bill forward because housing costs remain one of the biggest challenges facing Maine communities, and part of addressing that challenge is taking a close look at whether our regulatory systems are working as effectively as they should. The recommendations in this bill focus on several specific building code provisions that the working group identified as adding unnecessary cost or complexity to residential construction.

By reviewing and updating those requirements while maintaining strong safety standards, this bill represents a thoughtful effort to remove barriers that may be making it harder or more expensive to build housing in Maine, and I look forward to the committee's discussion. Thank you.